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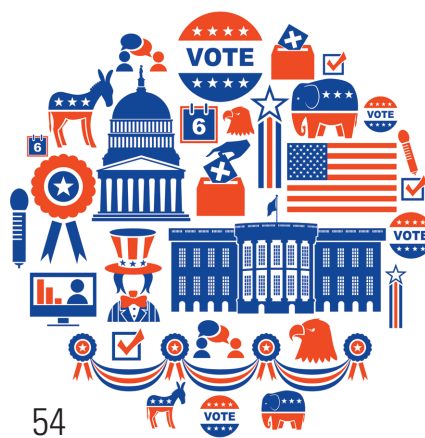


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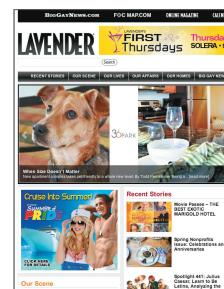
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ON THE COVER

SidewalkDog.com's monthly "Cover Dog Contest" winner for June, Deuce, relaxes in front of the Minneapolis skyline. Photo by Sarah Beth Photography

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We've been having busy times around here: Marriage, SCOTUS, Pride, and now Pets. So much catching up to do.

First, thank you for picking up the Pride Issue in June. From all reports, that thing flew off the newsstands. We ran out of copies here at the office and had to hope that we'd be getting our grubby hands on a few of them...which we did. Phew. This popularity told me a couple different things; print publishing isn't dead and we needed a celebratory issue. There was no spectre of negativity looming. We had a little breathing room. We could tend to our fatigue. And then we could celebrate. Believe me, putting together the marriage coverage in the Pride Issue was therapeutic—it wasn't done with any second-thoughts or doubts, it was done with respect, reverence, and happiness. Showing some unsung heroes, talking about how shocking it might be to suddenly have rights, featuring couples in wedding scenarios that can finally be “Happily Ever After” in marriage if they choose...all of these pieces looked toward a positive future based on years of hard work and resolve.

Next, I'd like to hear more from you. What are your thoughts and reflections about the recent developments? Minnesota passed marriage equality. The Supreme Court of the United States found Section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act unconstitutional (Section 2 still exists; see E.B. Boatner's “Edgewise” column). Californians are able to marry again thanks to the Supreme Court not upholding Prop 8. People are getting engaged and applying for marriage licenses. Where are you in this? What are you thinking? Let me know at editor@lavendermagazine.com. I'll collect thoughts and perhaps publish them as is, or use them to build a longer written piece; it's time to start documenting the next stage in this community's history.

As far as what's coming up in the next issues of Lavender, we've got our Pride in Pictures Issue coming out in two weeks. Last year, I suspended all regular columns and content to give the community a commemorative issue of Pride photography to celebrate the 40th year of Twin Cities Pride. It was received so well that we're doing it again this year. All photos, all Pride, all you.

Also, as we get closer to August 1 and the start of the new perpetual wedding season, we'll be out there documenting what's going on in the community. We'll publish pieces that talk about how marriage will affect you and your families, particularly as we learn more about life after DOMA. We'll keep a growing body of resources online so you'll be able to refer back to them as we keep moving forward.

And move forward we will.

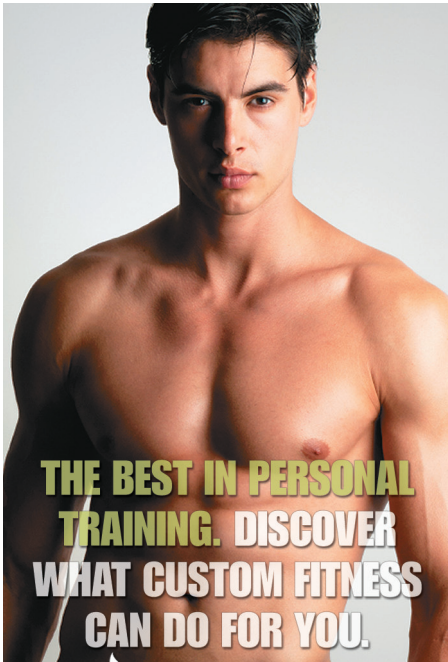
I'm grateful for our journey and our celebrations together. I look forward to continuing to document this historic time for this community.

With thanks,

Andy □



As an aside, I had a funny exchange on Twitter when our last Pet Issue came out with all dogs in it. The question was why weren't there any cats in it? I responded that we'd switch on and off with dogs in one then cats in the next...blah, blah, blah. Another tweeter very astutely laughed and noted that we're able to cover G and L and B and T in each issue but not both cats and dogs? Too true, dear reader. Too true. So, we have cats and dogs and even a bird in this Pet Issue. I'll focus on integration over separation from now on. Can't we all just get along? And, as an additional treat, please turn your attention to our friend, Fame, who now sports a knit rainbow mohawk hat that was featured in the Pets section of our Pride Issue. Fame's human, Jordan Roberge, not only got online and purchased the last one available but also sent me a picture of dear Fame wearing it. A cat in a knit rainbow mohawk hat. Some days, it just doesn't get much better than this.



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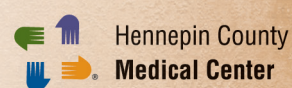
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Ding Dong, DOMA's Dead—Isn't It?

On June 26th, SCOTUS, having pushed voter rights back a half-century the day before, took a step forward in civil rights for GLBT citizens by declaring DOMA (Defense of Marriage Act) unconstitutional and letting gay marriage resume in California.

Marriage is now the state's call. A recent *Forbes* piece raised many business and personal issues. One example, noted contributor Steve Harris, is that with marriage defined by state rather than federal law, "the surviving spouse in the case may now be able to defer over \$300 thousand in estate tax."

SCOTUS slew one head of the dragon, but Section 2 is still alive, declaring that states don't have to recognize marriages from other states. With California back in the running, some 30 percent of Americans live in states that recognize same-sex marriage, but if you're married, or about to be come August first, check carefully before you and your spouse decide to relocate.

Section 2 will have to be addressed, particularly since it violates what is familiarly called the "Full Faith and Credit Clause" of the Constitution. That clause, Article IV, Section 1, says that states within the United States have to respect the "public acts, records, and judicial

proceedings of every other state."

I write this on the eve of Pride weekend, when there is great rejoicing—as indeed there should be. But along with the beads and beer, I ask you to remember that every bigot and religious right-winger that has opposed GLBT equal rights for decades, have not budged an inch. They're still out there, pushing the one-man one-woman version of marriage they claim is biblically derived, despite Solomon's many wives or David's peccadillos.

Mike Huckabee, former Governor of Arkansas (R), tweeted through crocodile tears, "My thoughts on the SCOTUS ruling that determined that same-sex marriage is OK: 'Jesus wept.'"

"Jesus wept," appears in John 11:35, and occurred after Jesus had heard that Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha, was dead four days. Jesus wept in empathy—then brought Lazarus back to life. There is not a word; not a syllable attributed to Jesus in the New Testament about homosexuals. For *or* against.

My own take: That Jesus today, seeing a severely discriminatory law struck down, would indeed have wept—for joy. □

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MISPLACED OVERLORDS: INTO THE WORLD OF A GAME MASTER

BY JUSTIN JONES / PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAY KELLY

Before I can offer him a drink, Jerry Harris hands over a grocery bag full of Dungeons & Dragons literature. "I thought these would help," he says. It's on our first meeting he makes this offer, not by request, but because, he says, he wants to make my research easier.

He wears a polo and jeans to our first interview. He's 5'11", fair-complected and naturally thin with brown eyes and peachy facial hair. He's easygoing, gregarious, and makes conversation right away. At 30, he looks and acts younger than he is.

Jerry is a gamer. He plays tabletop role-playing games (RPGs)—Dungeons & Dragons among them—in which players create and explore complex and imaginary worlds. Inside these worlds thrive characters through whom Jerry and his friends complete quests by combating enemies and winning treasures.

The RPG stereotype paints gamers like Jerry as social deviants, introverts in the extreme, and unfashionable, trench-coat-wearing high school bohos, strange and weak. Almost everyone with whom I spoke regarding this article, all professional adults, in some way affirmed this perception; friends and acquaintances met me with tilted-heads, confused stares, and loaded questions like, "That's weird. Why write about that?"

Jerry isn't ignorant to the stereotype, and when asked how he feels about it, he slows his otherwise hurried speech and removes from our

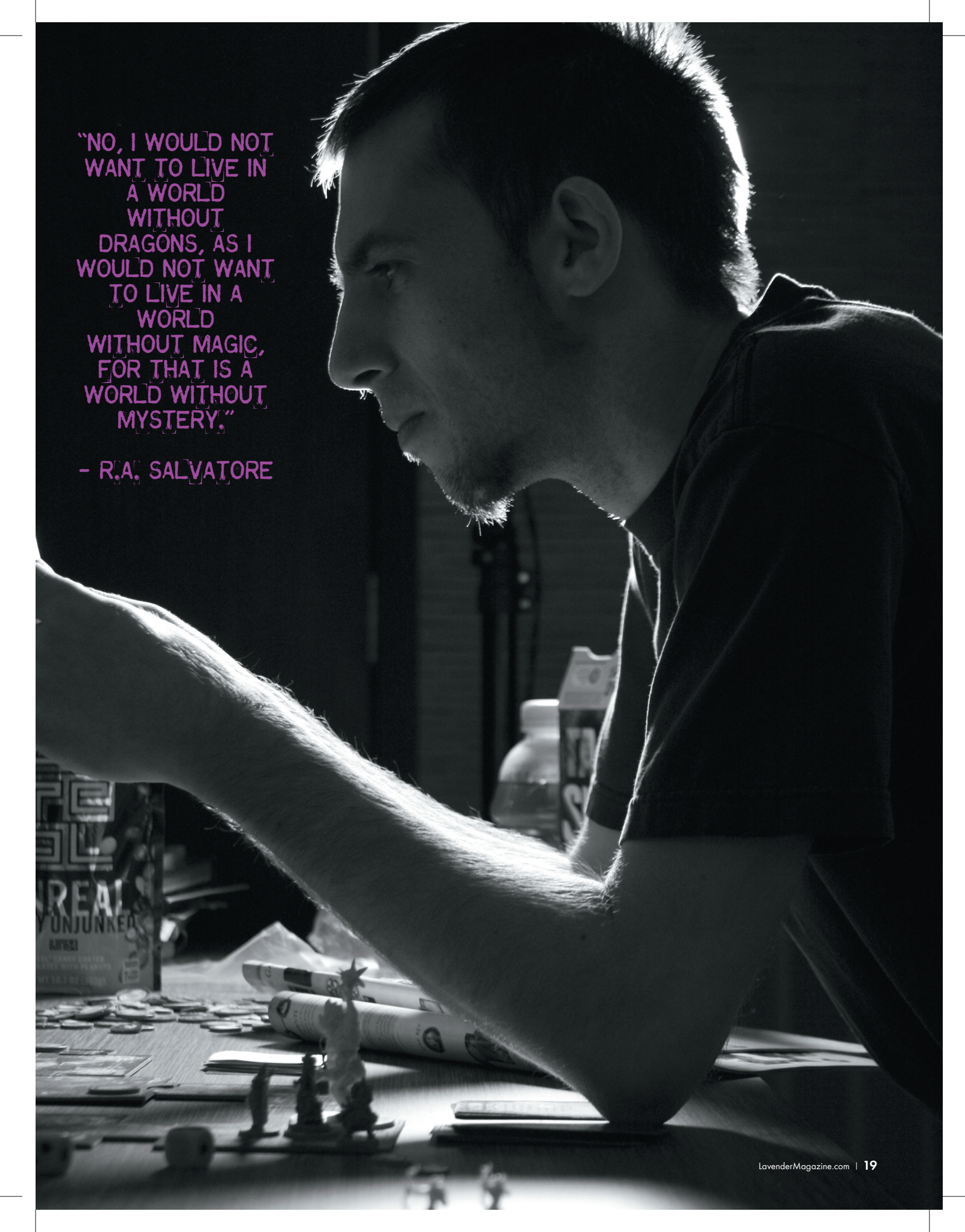
conversation his boy-like charm. Thoughtfully and calmly he responds, "If you have confidence, you attract the people you want in your life."

His confidence, indeed, is manifest.

Role-playing games fall into three categories: Live-Action, Virtual, and Tabletop.

Live Action Role-Playing (LARPing) is best analogized to outdoor childhood play for its physical and imaginative nature, but contains sometimes extremely adult content and high levels of strategy and forethought. Like stage actors, LARPers channel characters and game-play through costume, voice, prop, and movement. With no script from which to read and largely with no planned choreography, top players are masters of improvisation and experts in stage fighting. (Renaissance festivals are mild LARP environments.)

Virtual RPGs are the genre's most ubiquitous. '80s video game franchises Dragon Quest and Final Fantasy opened the format, and in 1991, AOL published Neverwinter Nights, the earliest example of what's today known as a graphics-based Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Game (MMORPG), allowing players to interact online through virtual avatars. Today, World of Warcraft is the most popular MMORPG title in the world, with more than 8 million unique members (and it's hard to stop playing: Anthony Rosner, a former prominent World of Warcraft player, in 2012 created a short film about



"NO, I WOULD NOT
WANT TO LIVE IN
A WORLD
WITHOUT
DRAGONS, AS I
WOULD NOT WANT
TO LIVE IN A
WORLD
WITHOUT MAGIC,
FOR THAT IS A
WORLD WITHOUT
MYSTERY."

- R.A. SALVATORE



his *WoW* experience and the consequences of its addiction, of which moving to Norway was part).

Games usually identified as “traditional” RPGs are tabletop hobby games. *Dungeons & Dragons* (1974) became the first commercially successful, mass-produced role-playing game, and is today widely acknowledged as the “grandfather” of modern RPGs. The game has spawned at least 242 authorized novels, 3 major feature films, comic strips, toys, art, and special interests magazines, in addition to thousands of RPGs inspired by its success. Many celebrities publicly have stated that they play, or have played, *Dungeons & Dragons*, including Vin Diesel, Moby, Wil Wheaton, and Robin Williams.

Tabletop RPGs, like LARPing but with minimal physical effort, often require gamers to create and develop characters, ground-up, through whom they play. Players typically designate a “Game Master” who acts as the game’s lead—whose role it is to create the environments and scenarios players navigate. In *Dungeons & Dragons*, the Game Master famously is called a “Dungeon Master,” or DM, and is a godlike non-competitor with dictatorial control over all aspects of play (including its ending: in the 2008 documentary *Dungeon Masters*, a DM, much to the chagrin of his players, abruptly ends a game that had been in active play for more than 10 years).

In *Dungeons & Dragons*, though he has limitless power, the DM is impartial between players and ambivalent to good and evil. In other tabletop RPGs, such as *Descent: Journeys in the Dark*, the Game Master is an antagonistic competitor—an “Overlord” whose sole objective it is to destroy the game’s heroes, controlled by other players. To win *Descent*, heroes must work together to seize dungeon treasures, conquer the Overlord’s monsters, and achieve objectives provided for a scenario.

Imagination and execution are requisite in the role-playing world. Inside Jerry Harris I find

both in extremis.

“We weren’t happy with the new *Descent*,” he says, referring to the title’s latest installment, “So my friends and I created an expansion pack to *Descent 1.0* with the changes we wanted to see.”

Jerry’s confidence rises audibly when he shares something for which he is proud. His eye contact in these moments is gripping, and his already high level of detail intensifies. He seems most proud of the changes—expansions, rather—he and his friends made to *Descent*, changes he believes not only make the game better, but that are marketable.

I’m skeptical when Jerry tells me he plans to pitch to the game’s developer his homemade supplement, so he hands over a few game cards for me to preview. Their quality is strikingly close to the factory-produced cards. He schools me on the expansion pack’s substantive content enhancements with language fast-paced, proud and jargon-dense—I catch dizzying terms like “lightning sword,” “armor class,” and “hero ability”—but, green as I am, the materials are impressive, and I sense that his project is no farfetched dream.

The developer to which Jerry and his friends intend to pitch their idea, Fantasy Flight Games, is a Roseville, Minnesota-based company. It entered the market in 1995 with tabletop board, card, and RPG games during a burgeoning time for the gaming industry. Console and PC-based games were revolutionizing RPGs with boundary-pushing virtual content and sophisticated graphics, while card and board games were becoming increasingly passé.

Maybe once considered a farfetched entry into the industry, Fantasy Flight today has estimated annual revenues exceeding \$30 million and continues reporting year-on-year double-digit percentage growth. It still hasn’t published a major video game. The video game industry, meanwhile, is leveling off.

Jerry’s bedroom looks like any bachelor’s:

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HEROES MUST
WORK TOGETHER
TO SEIZE
DUNGEON
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CONQUER THE
OVERLORD’S
MONSTERS, AND
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Continued on page 22 ➔

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clothes strewn about but somehow organized (Jerry seems likely to know exactly where everything is), a bedside microwave and beer fridge, and a computer desk. We step over laundry, gaming materials, and DVDs, and Jerry clears for me a leopard print armchair and sits on the edge of a sheet-less mattress. Behind him looms a glossy image of Lady Gaga.

Jerry has an air of humble confidence and, despite Lady Gaga and his large collection of role-playing games, he fits neither the gay male nor gamer stereotype. Jerry is quick to dismiss this observation altogether. He's uncomfortable with the word "stereotype." This is first apparent when he reflects on high school culture.

In high school, he says, "There are Leaders: the jocks, cheerleaders, the popular kids. There are the Gamers. The Outcasts—they're your goths, your stoners. Then there's the Get-Wits—the band geeks, drama geeks, computer nerds. Then there's the Liaisons that keep everything together—people who are friends with all groups, but part of no group. I was a gamer, a band and drama geek, but I was a liaison. I was smart, so I tutored some of the football players, and [they weren't what people stereotyped them to be]—they were smart. They needed help on some things, and the smart kids needed help on others... Was I picked on in high school? Maybe, yeah, probably, because I was a band and drama geek, but I had my close friends, and I had friends in every group."

On the stereotype of the gay male, he is hesitant to make an observation. I ask him to describe a "normal" gay man, and, after a long

pause: "Unfortunately, what comes to mind are the bad stereotypes—superficial and cliquey. Personally, my sexuality doesn't define who I am. Do I have to be superficial? No, I don't want to be," he says, but also admits, "That's not to say I don't make judgment calls. I do."

I take Jerry through a series of other stereotypes, and from drag queens to football players, Jerry relates himself to each, in some ways diverting away stereotypes from the groups they describe. Of drag queens, he sympathizes with what it's like feeling misunderstood in pursuit of one's passion and with the challenges one faces with character development.

"[But] overall, I think the gay community is accepting," Jerry tells me, though he says he sometimes feels like an outcast. He enjoys to some degree observing the gay community from the "outside-in" but wishes he were a more part of it. He places on this admission the caveat that "being part of it" doesn't entail changing himself—no level of acceptance, he emphasizes, is worth that price.

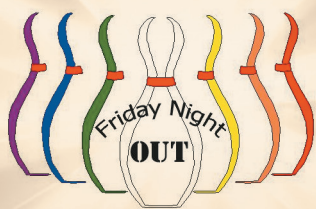
Jerry eats two ice cream Drumsticks back-to-back as we chat under Lady Gaga, and in the company of dirty laundry, a leopard-print chair, and *Dungeons & Dragons*, it occurs to me that Jerry is still the liaison he was in high school: relative to everyone without being just "anyone."

Jerry meets weekly with a group of friends to play *Descent*. Over potluck, homemade, and carryout food they spend Saturday nights navigating dungeons and conquering Overlords. Jerry counts these nights as some of his most treasured and fellow gamers as his closest friends.

"[BUT] OVERALL, I THINK THE GAY COMMUNITY IS ACCEPTING," JERRY TELLS ME, THOUGH HE SAYS HE SOMETIMES FEELS LIKE AN OUTCAST.

Continued on page 24 ➔





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As most of the gaming world is comprised, his group consists mostly of straight men, but sexuality is never at issue—not to say that it's wholly ignored in the larger role-playing community.

Jerry tells me that homophobia is prevalent among gamers, and while he's found a group of close friends with whom to game, he's run into his share of discomfort.

Of the stereotypes given to a traditional RPG player, open-mindedness is one of the flattering. One's inclined to think of gamers as we might perceive high school outcasts: strange and socially deviant, but definitively liberal and open-minded. In the gaming world, however, heterosexism and sexism, Jerry tells me, are commonplace.

Jerry relates his own experience to such class-within-a-class stereotyping, in both the GLBT and RPG communities. When one afternoon I visit a gaming center with Jerry, we're met with unwelcome, go-away stares. "[It's like being ostracized in the GLBT community]," he says, "You're used to the gay, lesbian, bi, and transgendered people. But when you come along and [are even more different], they're like, 'Wait... huh? You're part of our group how?'"

I initially sympathize with Jerry when he shares this part of the gaming community. Once outcast in high school, now shunned by much of the gay community, and faced with close-mindedness from other gamers, he's an outcast inside a community outcast by both straights and gays, in an already disenfranchised GLBT community.

If he's affected by any of the above, however, one can hardly tell. His disposition is as bright and as charming when he reflects on this as it is at all points in our conversation (his friends nicknamed him "Sunshine" for this unwavering non-judgmental optimism).

He invites me to his house for our final interview. It's a cozy two-story stucco-and-brick craftsman set on an eclectic street in west Minneapolis. Behind a mature oak, the home feels quaint but hidden. Inside I meet his roommate, a shy, scholarly man much older than Jerry. Their dynamic seems as much roommates and friends as it does father and son. Ever-polite and respectful, Jerry excuses us to his room to show me his game collection.

Jerry offers me Kool-Aid when we're chatting in his bedroom. He apologizes for the mess. He offers to show me—and give me—whatever material I can use to help write this piece. He's patient—incredibly patient—when teaching me the basics of *Descent*. He's honest, humble, and himself during this (and every) interview, all the while carrying about him an enviable sense of initiative and creativity.

Despite his good nature and impressive ambition, however, Jerry is an outcast because he plays role-playing games.

I can't help but think of those who've stereotyped him this way—people we call "normal."

For escapist entertainment, one today considers "normal" watching *Real Housewives of [Insert City Here]* and *American Idol*; reading *Us Weekly* and *TMZ*; texting ad nauseam; wasting away on Facebook. The Normal's escapist entertainment is found through the lives and in the imaginations of television producers, celebrity gossip, and smartphone backlight, leaving his brain to wander only in his sleep.

And it is the Normal who will judge Jerry and those like him. He'll outcast Jerry for playing silly games, for taking seriously pretend wizards and dragons, for wasting Saturday nights over imaginary adventures. The Normal will look at Jerry as a social hazard, a could-have-been, a fixer-upper, an object for the judging.

But Jerry doesn't rely on the imaginations of others. His escapist entertainments aren't found in the opulent lives of spoiled housewives or in the devastated dreams of wannabe singers. Jerry escapes to exactly where he wants to go—into worlds mammoth and fantastic—into stories of his own making.

Envy, what one considers the outcast feeling toward popular hierarchy, indeed applies to my perception of Jerry, but its meaning is inverse. I realize in Jerry's messy bedroom that the stereotypes you and I hold against him—and those that are held over us—are simple misplaced insecurities, locked inside the dungeons of our judgment, guarded by the dragons of our ignorance. ▣

Photography: Local Minneapolis photographer Jay Kelly seizes the beauty of his subjects. Finding great delight in allowing people to see how beautiful they can be is what he strives for. www.jaykellyimages.com



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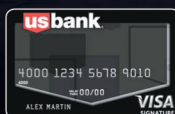
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Sweet Revenge! (or No Mother To Guide Her). Photo by Michal Daniel

APPOINTMENT WITH DEATH

Through July 28

Theatre in the Round, 245 Cedar Av., Mpls.

(612) 333-3010

www.theatreintheround.org

If you've read Agatha Christie's novel version, you may be surprised that she removed detective Hercule Poirot when she wrote the stage version. TRP dramaturg Angela Gross points out, "The play is regarded as one of her most radical rewrites." Director John Gaspard shares, "When she transitioned from novel to stage, she made more changes than she ever had to the structure of her story. Not only did she re-write the identity of the killer, but also the motive; so people who had read the book won't be one step ahead of people who haven't. In fact, she kept in some clues from the old version, just to throw people off track. Plus we've found some fun twists and turns in the text."

This is an especially interesting opportunity for Gaspard, whose own mystery novel, *The Ambitious Card*, will be released by Henery Press in August. He says mystery writing is all about structure and that Christie "had that nailed. Clues, characters, motives, means, opportunity, red herrings – like all the writers who have endured from the golden age of mysteries, Christie used all those tools to structure solid, involving, entertaining, mysteries."

IF YOU GIVE A MOUSE A COOKIE

Through July 21

Children's Theatre Company, 2400 Third Av. S., Mpls.

(612) 874-0400

www.childrenstheatre.org

Everyone's a comedian nowadays. Comics can stand up before a socially programmed audience (of which there are multitudes) that laughs simply at the mention of a dirty word, a bodily function, or a

politically incorrect phrase. Simply being offensive and transgressive as ends in themselves are considered to be talented in many circles. (Please!) And of course, there's always some reactionary who carps back that "It's only entertainment! Don't be so serious!" Hence the person making the legitimate critical observation is ridiculed.

Well, guess what! Something can be entertaining and accessible and have craft. For example, solid slapstick comedy, which most stand-ups could never master, is the ultimate populist entertainment. For a glowing example of this, catch *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie* at CTC. Two adults, Dean Holt as the Mouse and Reed Sigmund as the Boy, ricochet more comedy than the biggest barrage of bullets you'll catch in whichever *Whatever Action-Man Part Whatever Number* you will catch at the movies.

However, be warned: Holt's Mouse may turn your tummy and crack you up when you see what he does with marshmallows. You may go giddy when you see the Mouse make a major mess in the kitchen as he acts out a comic book story the unwitting Boy actively reads. This

action-packed comic book sequence is as entertaining as anything you'll see on the action movie screen this summer. And skating on scrub brushes has never been this fun!

Holt and Sigmund remind us what great comic imagination is. Imagination = great entertainment. What a concept! (It takes no imagination to say something crude at a comedy club.) Playwright Jody Davidson, who adapted the script from Laura Joffe Numeroff's book, has created a text that demands first rate comic ability in order to create first-rate entertainment. And this show, brilliantly directed by Peter Brosius, is definitely that!

SWEET REVENGE! (OR NO MOTHER TO GUIDE HER)

Through Aug. 24

Minnesota Centennial Showboat, Harriet Island Rd., St. Paul

(651) 227-1100

www.theatre.umn.edu/showboat

The Showboat's annual melodrama performed by U of M students is a regional summer staple with its short musical numbers called 'olios.' However, 2013's staging of Lillian Mortimer's *Sweet Revenge!* vividly directed by Peter Moore, is one their best traditional melodrama selections in many summers. The situation itself is ripe for booing and hissing the villain and cheering the hero and other good gals and guys.

Like any good melodrama there's a deadly sin that drives the villain. In this case it's greed. Bank robber John Livingstone is played with crafty assurance by Joseph Pyfferoen, along with his cohort in crime, Mother Taggart, a drunk whose mean streak definitely comes through Laura D. Hickey's performance.

Rebecca Wilson and Christian Boomgaarden are sweetly sentimental as Rose and Ralph, a couple who must keep their marriage secret out of fear that Livingstone will blackmail the insecure Ralph for a perceived crime that Ralph actually didn't commit. When you see the play the circumstances around this will be clear.

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Urinetown. Photo by Michal Daniel

Bunco, described as 'A Strong Orphan Girl.' You guessed it: she's butch and likable, reminiscent of the Calamity Jane archetype. Nike Kadri and David Nando are lovably rustic as an interracial country couple that wouldn't have been considered by most, if not all, casting agents when the play opened in 1905. But nowadays we know there were interracial couples in isolated parts of the US.

Actors Kevin Gotch, Allie Babich, and Bear Brummel also cut vivid melodramatic figures. Everyone's vocals are solid in the olios with an ethereal Moynihan featured in a tribute to Chicago dance pioneer Loie Fuller (1862-1928). We get a glimpse into the reality that the turn of the last century performance possibilities could be innovatively modernist, not just melodramatic. Vern Sutton's olio direction and Anton Melnichenko's piano accompaniment perfectly suit the vaudevillian spirit.

URINETOWN

Through Aug. 11
Jungle Theater, 2951 Lyndale Av. S., Mpls.
(612) 822-7063
www.jungletheater.com

The global water shortage was fully known of when *Urinetown* first performed in 1999, but its current revival at the Jungle has arrived when the drought in the American southwest has coincided with shortages in the Upper Midwest, including Minnesota. In the Dakotas oil interests and some municipalities have been in serious conflict over this.

Serendipitously, the conflict between corporate monopoly and the average citizen is central to *Urinetown*, where going to the toilet has been privatized and public urination equals the death penalty. Kersten Rodau as Penelope Pennywise, a toady for the power elite, sings a spirited rendition of 'It's a Privilege to Pee.' Penelope, pound-foolishly, does her part to keep the masses from rising up, but sometimes you can't keep 'em down. And such an uprising, which results in the abduction of an heiress, makes for a musical that has us consider the uncomfortable politics of the haves and the have-nots.

Ray Berg's music direction of the tunes by composer/lyricist Mark Hollmann scrupulously masters a broad range of styles, which his terrific orchestra and director John Command's crackling cast relishes. Every single actor embodies a vaudevillian performance technique that frequently dazzles and propels the action with vibrant vitality.

Hollmann and book-writer Greg Kotis are clearly at odds with corporate monopoly but they ultimately reflex to the trivial with the catastrophic aspects the show puts forth. It seems to promise a dark twist that master satirists like author Johnathan Swift or filmmaker Robert Altman built into their story structures, so that you experience both laughs galore and a chill down the spine. Regrettably, Hollmann and Kotis, didn't go this route and it may be what keeps the musical on theater history's second tier of major musicals, rather than the first.

THE WORLD OF WORK: IMAGES OF LABOR AND INDUSTRY, 1850 TO NOW

Through Sept. 1
Minneapolis Institute of Arts,
2400 Third Av. S., Mpls.
(888) MIA ARTS (642-2787)
www.artsmia.org

Here's another small MIA exhibit that goes right to the jugular. In a 1927 piece by Albert Decaris you can sense the sweat coming off the men. Titled 'Miners,' the eye is drawn toward the musculature of men with bare torsos picking away and handling coal chunks. Bodies, beautiful. Situation, miserable, not to mention ultimately lethal. A section from Antonio Pollaiuolo's 'Battle of the Naked Men' engraving is shown to indicate its 15th century influence on Decaris.

In contrast, the idea of the muscular ideal as a source of empower-

ment, rather than a slide to disintegration, is seen in Rockwell Kent's bold 'Workers of the World Unite!' from a 1937 engraving. Another International Workers tribute from 1941 by Kent bears a resemblance to the Mosfilm logo of the Soviet film industry. It was a time when the US and the USSR stood tall and united against the Nazis.

American master James McNeill Whistler, whose mother is an American immortal, is also represented in a hazy, dreamy etching titled 'The Forge.' You can sense the heat and the smoke. Another master, this one from France, Edgar Degas, is also a part of this world of work with 'The Laundresses.'

There are also strong civil rights statements. '11 year Old Spinner in a Cotton Mill,' a haunting 1908 photo by Lewis Hine, brings to mind those countless unprotected child laborers (in this picture, a girl) before FDR's New Deal era. David Parker's 1995 photo of a boy titled 'Laborer, Pumico Quarry, Lombock, Indonesia' reminds us that sanctioned child hard labor exists in recent history and continues.

As for race, its intertwining with religious bigotry is shamefully exposed in a stereo card from the 1870s titled 'Heathen Chinese, The Miner, No. 1.' A Chinese miner stands with his pick axe. Such cards were used to distribute to make a mean-spiritedly stigmatizing point. The MIA is right to make us aware of this part of history. □



Rockwell Kent (American, 1882 - 1971), *Workers of the World, Unite!*, 1937, wood engraving. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Richard D. Humleker in memory of Mrs. John S. Wier

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Iceberg lettuce has never before been so sexy. Photos by Hubert Bonnet



THE BUTTERED TIN

My grandmother's hands were delicate. Age had bent her fingers, swelled her knuckles, and I could trace the roads of purple veins through her skin; soft, but crinkled like tissue paper. These hands held mine as mine grew. On her finger she wore the diamond ring set that now resides on mine. As she read me storybooks I would watch her hands, fascinated by all she did with them. In the kitchen I watched as she used a stick of butter to prepare a pan for baked goods. Then she would scoop a hand-

ful of flour, dust the pan, tap the sides, and unceremoniously dump the excess in the sink. Then we would pour the batter, often her signature blueberry muffins.

While I was chatting with Jennifer Lueck about her new St. Paul breakfast and lunch spot that she recently opened with business partner and pastry chef Alicia Hinze, all she had to do was say the name and I was instantly back in that kitchen; smiling at the memory of those hands that I haven't held in too many

Continued on page 32 ➔

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(Clockwise from left) Alicia Hinze and Jennifer Lueck welcome you to Lowertown; Chocolate cake: Because why wouldn't you want your cake and eat it, too?; The Buttered Tin Chef Jason Schellin. Photos by Hubert Bonnet

years. That's exactly the feeling they were hoping to evoke. While there are most certainly comfort-food memories to be found inside, like sticky slices of coconut cake and a stroke-of-genius Easter dinner sandwich, everything is executed at a higher level than a home cook could ever hope to achieve.

The restaurant, located in St. Paul's Lowertown neighborhood, doesn't feel like a throwback. The walls are the color of lemon buttercream, capped with chocolate-colored tin ceilings and filled with gleaming white accents. It's elegant without being fussy.

Hinze arrives early in the morning, when she and her bakers assemble a collection of biscuits, cookies, cupcakes, cakes, and the bread for the sandwiches. There is always a collection of cupcakes in the cooler, items she gained some amount of fame with, when she made an appearance on the Food Network's *Cupcake Wars* (she was on the winning team). Every day there's a different savory biscuit offering, one day it was spinach pesto, another was ham and cheddar, which can be eaten at room temperature, or warmed up by one of their friendly staff members.

On the savory side, Chef Jason Schellin has been brought in. Schellin is known for his elegant, seasonal work at Muffuletta. The Buttered Tin hasn't been open long, but I've been drawn back time and again to work my way through

this entire menu. Perfectly fitting for this walkable neighborhood's lucky inhabitants, you could eat here every day for lunch and breakfast. Hearty breakfast fare includes items like their huevos rancheros benedict which is built upon tender, savory/sweet cornbread squares and topped with creamy avocado slices, perfectly poached eggs, and black bean-studded salsa. Served with a perfectly dressed mixed green salad and a pile of fresh fruit, it's a beautifully balanced meal.

Other breakfast highlights include an "omelette" made of hash browns. Be still my heart, ultra-crispy shredded potatoes are folded over Gruyere and tender, young asparagus. Top it with a poached egg and you are in breakfast Nirvana. They also have seriously good pancakes topped with bacon-packed butter and real maple syrup.

An instant classic served, as Lueck joked with me, "as God and I intended," is the Easter sandwich. Roasted ham (not those sad, floppy cold cuts but real ham) and cheesy scalloped potatoes are served on fresh ciabatta. Not only did I wish my family ate like this every spring, this dish also won me over on ciabatta which is a bread that so often goes awry being chewy and the sort of thing that spits out your sandwich fillings.

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bite-topped with gooey cheese, a house made, pickle-crispy Thousand Island dressing, and ribbons of caramelized onions. Sandwiches are served with options of fresh greens or Bugles, perfect for making finger puppets.

My favorite classic-inspired dish reinvented is the Iceberg Stack salad, layers of crispy lettuce dressed in herb-flecked buttermilk, topped with lardons (fat hunks of crispy pork belly), and cherry tomatoes like jewels. Each bite is crunchy, cold, rich, salty, and awesomely porky. I've heard there's a t-shirt on order declaring you got your lardon at The Buttered Tin. Made me snicker.

No matter how spectacular the entrees are, you've got to save room for dessert. The daily cake selection is worth lingering over. Today is, after all, your very merry unbirthday. The coffee cake inspires a Golden Girls sort of coffee break, one where all your secrets are spilled with a cup of joe and a couple of great friends. They even have a blueberry-packed poundcake, with just a little bit of lemon flavor, not exactly like grandma made, but maybe even better. ■

The Buttered Tin
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www.thebutteredtin.com



(From top left) What a way to wake up: Huevos Rancheros Benedict; A daily dose of potted cheese, house-made ricotta with herbs and honey; Beef shortrib Reuben with Bugles. Photos by Hubert Bonnet

NEWSY BITS



The hotly anticipated **Sandcastle** is now open on the shores of Lake Nokomis. The latest in concession stand revitalization comes from Chef Doug Flicker, the innovative chef behind **Piccolo**. They've also got beer and wine on tap. Don't miss the Dog Flicker; it's a kimchee, cilantro, and egg-topped beef wiener. Yurm.

The new restaurant popping up in the old Joe's Garage space gave us a preview at Pride. **The Triton** menu is being crafted by Chef Jack Riebel. Could the food finally live up to the patio finery? Signs are looking good.

The **Kaskaid Hospitality** Company continues to expand. This week it was announced that they would be taking over the former Trocaderos space to use for their catering business and they have signed the lease to take over the Uptown Old Chicago real estate. They already run several **Crave** restaurants, **Figlio 2.0**, **Uptown Urban Eatery**, and **Union**.

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Geneva Richards Triumphs Again at Miss City of the Lakes Pageant

On the evening of June 27-28 (appropriately enough, the anniversary of the 1969 New York City Stonewall Riot in which drag queens played a major role), perennial titleholder Geneva Richards won the Miss City of the Lakes Pageant at the Gay 90's La Femme Show Lounge. She emerged on top of a field of 12 contestants with her talent number, a flawless rendition of Tina Turner performing her smash-hit cover of "Burn Baby Burn (Disco Inferno)." La Femme Show Director Nina Di Angelo emceed the pageant. Richards, who captured the Miss Gay 90's crown last October 25, is the only female impersonator ever to reign concurrently with that title and now as Miss City of the Lakes. The pageant debuted at the now-defunct Cloud 9 bar in Minneapolis in 1987 and subsequently took place at other now-defunct local bars, but the Gay 90's has hosted the event since 1995. ■



Geneva Richards (left) and Nina Di Angelo. Photo by George Holdgrafer

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BAR SHOWCASE | photos by George Holdgrafer

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Summer
Pet
Issue

Pooch Perfect

written by Shane Lueck

photography by Sarah Beth Photography

with
SidewalkDog.com:
How a dog-lover filled
a need for local information



Continued on page 40 ➔

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Summer Pet Issue

Why leave your pooch at home when they can join you on your adventures throughout the city?



Why leave your pooch at home when they can join you on your adventures throughout the city? This was the question Ali Jarvis faced which eventually gave her the idea to start SidewalkDog.com, an organization aimed at being the number one resource for dog-friendly information in the Twin Cities. Each entrepreneurial effort begins by trying to solve a problem that doesn't have a solution quite yet, and Jarvis found herself with quite the dilemma five years ago.

Jarvis had grown up in a home with dogs and, ten years after graduating college, decided it was time to have a furry friend of her own. It wasn't long before she adopted a Cavalier King Charles Spaniel, naming it Luc. Shortly after welcoming Luc into her life, she discovered her furry friend required special attention. "I had a dog with medical issues who required medication at different intervals throughout the day," Jarvis says. "I found I constantly had to go home to give him medication, so I started looking for dog-friendly businesses where I can live my life and take care of him at the same

time, whether they be coffee places I can go to with my friends or dog-friendly dry cleaners."

Her search for businesses willing to accommodate her four-legged friend wasn't as successful as she'd originally hoped, however. Jarvis was unable to find a resource to answer her questions about dog-friendly businesses in the Twin Cities. After finding herself wishing for one all-inclusive website to provide locally based information to dog owners, Jarvis decided to fill that missing niche. And so SidewalkDog.com was born.

From dog parks and restaurant patios to apartments, hotels, and events, SidewalkDog.com curates all-things-dog-friendly in a convenient location for dog owners to peruse at their own will. SidewalkDog.com's blog acts as a media company, discussing the happenings on the local dog scene. Coverage ranges from companies that donate tips to a local shelter to a profile of a local celebrity and their dog. Growing to a readership of 80,000 unique visitors and 400,000

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Summer Pet Issue



"Our most popular feature is the dog-friendly restaurant patio section."



page views last year, Jarvis notes that people use the site for different purposes. "Some people are really into the dog park map," she says. "Our most popular feature is the dog-friendly restaurant patio section. Even in the winter, when people can't bring their dogs, they still want to support those dog-friendly restaurants."

So why is Jarvis's project so popular? "There's been a cultural shift over the past 20 years or so," she says. "Dogs were always considered part of the family, but we never included them in things outside of the home. Now people want to include them, so our site helps them do that."

Depending upon business sponsors to cover the costs of running the site, relationships with local businesses is the key to her success. Conveniently, SidewalkDog.com offers businesses a way to advertise their dog-loving ways to those who might not even visit the website. Through the use of decals, Jarvis's brainchild allows business to communicate their canine accommodations: one for restaurants, coffee shops, and other places that serve food (featuring the slogan "Dogs Welcome on Our Patio") as well as one for other businesses (with the simple phrase "Dogs Welcome").

Jarvis is quick to articulate how this signage benefits the business

owner. "People will just walk by a business if they are with their dog," she says. "You don't feel comfortable leaving a dog outside while you go in, so this lets people know they can stop and shop." She suggests businesses do more than just post her decal, though. Her best advice is to communicate exactly what their policies are through signs such as "any dog you can carry" or "no wagging tails" if the establishment showcases merchandise close to the floor.

Although much of the website's lifestyle expertise finds its reach within the Twin Cities, there are a surprisingly high number of viewers from beyond the metro area. "People from outside of the Twin Cities and Minnesota use our site for when they're visiting; they know what to do with their dog when they're in town," Jarvis says. And with a demographic ranging from 25 to 55, her organization addresses concerns for every age group. Jarvis cites a surge in younger people becoming pet owners before having children and retired persons using her site as they grow into empty nesters and begin looking for ways to fill the void with their canines. Addressing the GLBT community specifically, Jarvis says "dogs have always been such an important part of the family dynamic," frequently in place of children.

As a member of Minnesotans United for All Families, Sidewalk-

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Blessing of the Animals



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Dog.com has long been a supporter of the GLBT community. Past involvement has included Pooch Pride, a happy hour on the patio of Loring Kitchen & Bar that allowed people to mingle and celebrate with their dogs in tow and then leave the pups at home for the rest of Pride if the weather was too hot. Unfortunately, scheduling conflicts kept the event from being held last year, but Jarvis is eager to start it up again in the future. "Pride is an incredibly important event for us to support," Jarvis says, before adding that SidewalkDog.com has been at Pride for three of the past four years.

Inspired by her organization's first year of involvement with Twin Cities Pride, SidewalkDog.com created T-shirts which read "If I pee on it, it's mine," which have grown into a huge hit. Currently waiting for stock to be replenished, Jarvis says "you can get away with that kind of sass at Pride and people love the shirts!"

But it isn't all fun and games for the dog lover. Jarvis has been appearing on Twin Cities Live once a month with a rescue dog, trying to find an owner. Her successful track record of 32 out of 34 dogs adopted maintains her company's mission. "We are big advocates of helping people live life with their dog while promoting rescue and responsibility." SidewalkDog.com even sells Minneapolis pet licenses for the City of Minneapolis, rewarding those who do so through the site with freebies (such as dog food from Solid Gold Northland and free doggie daycare from Metro Dogs Daycare and Boarding) with new rewards being added in the next few weeks. "We're rewarding folks for being responsible dog owners and obeying the law," she says.

These sentiments about responsibility are echoed in an article recently published on the site: a guide to patio etiquette. Don't think your dog should be taken everywhere on the site's directory; not everyone has the right dog to take here, there, and everywhere. "We're always promoting knowing your dog and knowing what situations your dog does well in and how it impacts the people around you."

Responsible pet ownership is something which Jarvis is actively

involved in, as she and her company are vocal advocates for passing puppy mill legislation. "Breeders aren't regulated, so there are a lot of deplorable conditions and incredibly sick dogs," Jarvis explains. "Minnesota is one of those states that doesn't regulate the industry, so we do a lot of advocating."

All of that seriousness aside, Jarvis stresses her love for engaging with the public. Her favorite example of this? Each month, the SidewalkDog.com Facebook page holds a Cover Dog Contest. If your dog wins, they get a photo shoot with the SidewalkDog.com photographer and your dog's photo is the Facebook page's cover photo for the month. With the site featuring massive amounts of user-generated content, Jarvis "tries to view it as more of a community than a company." Users can submit pet-friendly events and businesses to the directory as well as write reviews of the listed businesses. "We engage with our community a ton and try to give away prizes and feature real dog-owners a lot," she says.

Although the company doesn't often host events of its own, Jarvis says they frequently sponsor events as a media partner or will share event information through their site. One of the more popular events, Pet-A-Palooza, is an annual event hosted at the State Fairgrounds with free admission to pet owners. Some upcoming examples include Pugstock, Dog Days of Summer, and Pet Haven Doggy Dash, all with event details posted on the website.

For anyone seeking involvement with Jarvis's company to share any dog-related knowledge, you need only contact her. "We welcome anybody to contact us about writing," she says, stressing her constant search for writers. This is, of course, in addition to the user-generated methods of involvement. "As long as you can match our sassy, informative tone, we'll give you a shot!" □

Photography: Sarah Beth Ernhart specializes in bright, fun pet photography, offers her signature "Joy Sessions" for terminally ill and elderly pets, and supports many local rescues. www.sarahbethphotography.com



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Continued on page 48 ➔

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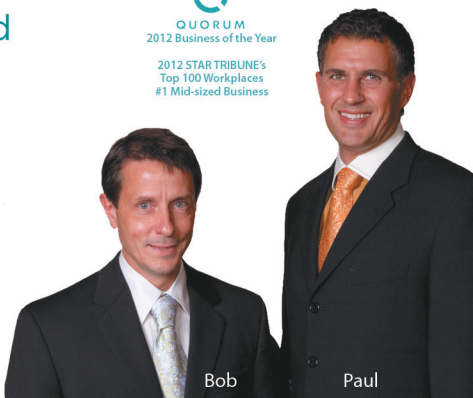
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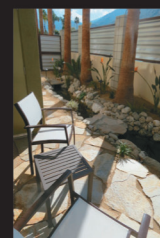
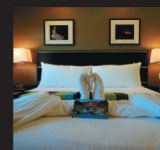
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medicine as a sign of Lyme infection) and obvious tick bites are often missed due to our pets' thick coats.

The amount and type of prevention required for a given pet depends upon their individual Lyme disease exposure risk. A dog that spends every weekend at the cabin is going to require more prevention than a highly urban dog. For dogs with low-level exposure, regular use of a topical flea and tick preventative may be adequate. These products are intended to actively repel ticks or to kill them before they can attach to your pet's skin, take a blood meal, and spread the *Borrelia* organism, a process that can take 24-48 hours. Our clinic recommends the use of Frontline Plus or Certifect, topical liquid products that are used on a monthly basis. These products should be applied according to the manufacturer's recommendations whenever the ambient temperature is above 40°F. It is important to read warning labels carefully – some flea and tick preventatives contain insecticides or repellents that present toxicity concerns for cats and some humans. In addition, we recommend vaccination against Lyme disease for dogs that have significant tick exposure. While vaccination is generally very safe, ask your veterinarian for specific recommendations if your pet has experienced an allergic reaction to past vaccinations or if they have a history of other immune-related disorders.

If you suspect that your dog has contracted Lyme disease, please seek prompt medical attention. Diagnosis of Lyme disease may not

always be straightforward due to limitations of the tests that are currently available. The most common diagnostics look for evidence of Lyme antibodies, which may be absent in the very early stages of disease and will remain in your dog's circulation for months to years after infection. Specific tests used to confirm active Lyme infection are still being developed and improved. Blood and urine analysis, blood pressure measurement, and a thorough physical examination will help to assess the level of disease for any given pet.

Uncomplicated Lyme disease in dogs often responds well to an extended course of antibiotics (generally doxycycline or amoxicillin) and supportive care. Overall prognosis may be less favorable for pets with more advanced disease or those with complications; some may require long-term care.

Lyme Disease can be a serious health concern and prevention is the key! Talk to your veterinarian today to discuss an appropriate tick preventative and vaccination protocol that will be right for your pet.

2.) Can pets get sunburned? Is there anything I should do to protect my pets?

Simply put, yes. Pets with thin or light colored coats, or those with areas of missing fur, are at risk for sunburn. Areas on the belly or groin are also at risk for pets who spend time on their backs basking in the sunshine. Choosing a safe sunscreen is essential to avoid pos-



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Ultimately, every pet is an individual – discuss your pet's behavioral concerns with your veterinarian so that you can work together to formulate a plan for training and medicating your four-legged friend.

sible toxicity – look for products marketed for human infants or specifically for pets, and read the label carefully as some products may be safe for dogs but not for cats or other animals. Look for a product with SPF 15 or above and be sure to apply early and often (repeat every 4-6 hours if significant sun exposure is expected).

3.) What do you recommend for animals who are afraid of storms?

Storm phobias are commonly encountered in our pets, and these issues often progress with age. Thunderstorm phobias can be more challenging to address than other noise phobias (i.e. gunshots, fireworks) because the storm itself presents your pet with not only a frightening sound, but also with visual and barometric cues. Management of a noise phobia can be broken into two major components used in conjunction with one another: behavioral medication and pharmacologic therapy.

Pets with mild symptoms may respond well to provision of a light and sound-insulated space (i.e. a kennel covered with heavy blankets) or the use of specially designed garments designed to snugly wrap your pet to provide a sense of comfort (i.e. Thundershirt). These pets may also show improvement with training targeted at desensitization and counter-conditioning, techniques for which you can review with your veterinarian or an experienced dog trainer. It is critical never to punish your pet for phobic behavior as this will only reinforce their

fearful response.

If you have a pet with more significant phobic behavior during storms, the use of short or long-term behavioral medications may be indicated. Short-acting anti-anxiety medications (alprazolam, trazodone) are often a great first step, provided that they can be given 1-2 hours prior to storms. Some patients may also benefit from a secondary long-term medication (fluoxetine, clomipramine) during warmer weather if their symptoms persist. Tranquilizers (acepromazine) should be avoided, as they leave your pet's mental capacity intact during use and can therefore worsen phobic behavior. Pet owners who wish to avoid medications may consider the use of calming supplements or pheromone collars.

Ultimately, every pet is an individual – discuss your pet's behavioral concerns with your veterinarian so that you can work together to formulate a plan for training and medicating your four-legged friend.



Kevin Roeser, DVM, practices veterinary medicine at St. Francis Animal and Bird Hospital. Additional information regarding a number of commonly encountered diseases and other helpful topics can be found at www.stfrancisanimalandbird.com.

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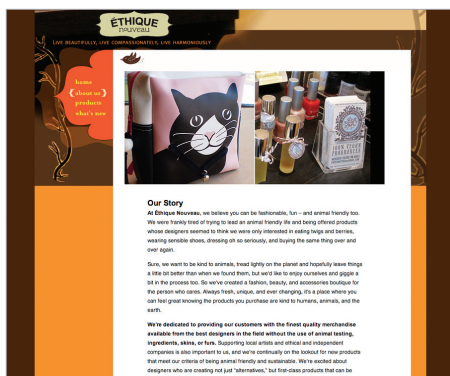
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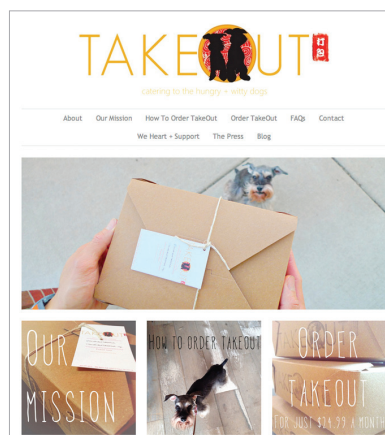
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The Other 'F' Word

As a matter of form, the press tries not to use vulgarities and profanities in their work. If they are paraphrasing someone who used a certain vulgar word, they'll use a euphemism like "the eff word" or F-word. When quoting someone, they will take out some letters to be accurate yet soften the blow by doing something like this; f—k. This general rule also applies to other offensive words for minorities like the "n" word. Nobody wants to write these things but since these words exist and have heft and meaning, they will sometimes come up. Let me explain why I'm bantering about semantics and journalistic style books.

An issue arose recently when councilperson Robert Lilligren lost the DFL endorsement for the seat he holds on the Minneapolis City Council to Abdi Warsame, who is Somali. There were people at the caucuses who had been using Lilligren's sexual orientation as a way to sway attendees to vote against him. Maya Rao of the *Star Tribune* wrote about the incidents on April 26, 2013, in a piece called, 'Political hardball alleged in Minneapolis city council race':

"Volunteers for Lilligren's campaign said in interviews that people on Warsame's team essentially took over the April 16 caucuses, speaking in Somali and criticizing those who supported the other candidates, while also trying to turn more conservative Somali elders away from Lilligren by highlighting his openly gay status.

"It's very unsettling. It's very distressing. Can we run a clean race?" said Maryam Marne Zafar, a caucus captain for Lilligren who submitted one of the challenges."

This is interesting on a couple of levels. First of all, this is a DFL convention. For operatives to be using Lilligren's being gay as a way to delegitimize his candidacy is incredibly offensive. A candidate's sexual orientation isn't relevant as to whether they can serve in public service or not. What's even worse is that these operatives were also endorsing this idea to some elements of the Somali community. I see the Somali community as another victim of this kind of underhanded sleazy politicking.

Since Rao was strongly suggesting harsh words may have been used, I called her up. She told me she'd interviewed several Somali activists separately and they all told her Lilligren had been called a "faggot" as translated from Somali. This is even worse. It is one thing to say openly gay candidates like Lilligren are gay but quite another to use a de-meaning slur against them.

Lilligren lost the endorsement and Warsame, his opponent, denies the name-calling ever happened. I spoke at length with Rao and she believes the witnesses she talked to. She stands behind the story.

Then, I began to hear rumors the same thing was being done to another candidate. I'd heard from a couple of independent confidential sources that some in the Somali community were told Jacob Frey was gay. After hearing this, we don't have just a single incidence of using sexual orientation as a political weapon, but we seem to have campaign operatives who are using us as the muck to throw at opposing candidates. With Lilligren, the use of sexual orientation could be glossed over. But, that doesn't

work with Frey.

You see, Jacob Frey isn't gay.

The gossip about him is obviously, and maliciously, intended to steer Somali voters away from him and toward other candidates. This is sick, wrong, and it caters to the worst possible tendencies we can have. To prejudge someone based on characteristic you cannot change is discrimination at its worst.

I tried to get Somali witnesses who heard the rumors about Frey on the record but their community—while close-knit—is also close-mouthed. That's too bad because as I said, I believe they are victims of this smear campaign as well. Their ideas about us are being ratified and amplified by the political forces in Minneapolis. We have a duty to put a stop to it.

It wasn't that long ago that being gay or lesbian meant political death. Minnesota had the honor of seeing some of the first openly gay and lesbian legislators in the country. Sen. Allan Spears came out of the closet in 1974 and was a national example of a gay public official. So has Rep. Karen Clark been, since 1980. The idea of people in the GLBT community being elected officials in no longer a rarity but we must be vigilant.

We cannot let those in ANY political party say we aren't worthy to serve because of our sexual orientation. If political operatives want to say "faggots" like us can't be city council people or mayors or U.S. Senators, it is our duty to ourselves to say "not on my watch." Too many have fought too hard for too long to let anyone demean our place in this society. We are not just the other "F word." □

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BIGGAYNEWS FROM WASHINGTON, DC: Gay Marriage Ruling – Supreme Court Finds DOMA Unconstitutional

The *Los Angeles Times* reports that the Supreme Court struck down a key part of the federal Defense of Marriage Act on Wednesday and declared that same-sex couples who are legally married deserve equal rights to the benefits under federal law that go to all other married couples. The nine justices, in a vote of 5 to 4, came to a decision that means that more than 100,000 GLBT couples who are legally married in their own states can now take advantage of federal benefits such as tax breaks and pension rights. The decision today does not affect the provision of the law that stipulates that no state is required to recognize gay marriages performed in other states.

BIGGAYNEWS FROM WASHINGTON, DC: Proposition 8 – Supreme Court Clears Way For Gay Marriage In California

The *Los Angeles Times* reports that the Supreme Court cleared the way Wednesday for same-sex marriages to resume in California as the justices, in a procedural ruling, turned away the defenders of Proposition 8. In a 5 to 4 majority, the court said that the private sponsors of Proposition 8 were not legally able to appeal following the ballot measure being struck down by a San Francisco federal judge. The court's action now sends the case back to California where top officials have stated that same-sex marriage is a matter of equal rights.

BIGGAYNEWS FROM ALASKA: Lisa Murkowski Backs Gay Marriage

The *Huffington Post* reports that Senator Lisa Murkowski (Republican – Alaska) expressed support for gay marriage Wednesday, becoming the third sitting Republican senator to do so. The senator said that while she realized that she will likely be criticized by fellow Republicans for her decision, she is comfortable with her position on supporting same-sex couples to marry. Senator Murkowski revealed that her change in opinion was influenced by the story of an Alaskan lesbian couple who adopted four children, and the legal hurdles they face as a same-sex couple.

BIGGAYNEWS FROM THE AMA: Medical Association Voted to Allow Gays to Donate Blood

Time Magazine reports that members of the American Medical Association voted to end a decades-old ban against gay men donating blood. The ban was put into place in 1983 by the FDA, thinking that it would help protect the nation's blood banks from HIV-infected blood. Dr. William Kobler said: "The lifetime ban on blood donation for men who have sex with men is discriminatory and not based on sound science."

BIGGAYNEWS FROM WISCONSIN: Wisconsin Gay Pride Parade In Wausau Canceled

The *Pioneer Press* reports that the organizer of what would have been Wausau's first gay pride parade has cancelled it, saying he has experienced a wave of ugliness in the community. Daxx Bouvier, who is from California but owns a home in Wausau, said that he made his decision to cancel the parade following the negative comments from a Wausau City Council member and a number of articles in the local media caused people planning to be in the parade to be concerned for their own safety. Bouvier said that he does not plan to organize any future gay pride events in the city.



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POLITICS

BIGGAYNEWS FROM FLORIDA:

Anti-Gay Movement Closes After 37 Years

TheAge.com in Australia reports that Exodus International has dissolved itself, issuing a lengthy apology for the harm it caused during its 37 years of existence. The Christian group was a proponent of "conversion therapy", which it claimed could "cure" people of homosexuality through prayer and psychotherapy. Exodus recruited gays with this approach: "The sin of homosexual behavior, like all sins, can be forgiven and healed by the grace revealed in the life and death of Christ."

BIGGAYNEWS FROM GEORGIA:

Chick-Fil-A President Deletes Gay Marriage Remark

Fox News reports that the president of the fast-food restaurant chain Chick-fil-A again injected himself into the gay marriage debate. Dan Cathy criticized recent U.S. Supreme Court rulings, posting on his Twitter: "Sad day for our nation; founding fathers would be ashamed of our generation to abandon wisdom of the ages regarding cornerstone of strong societies." The post was later deleted.

BIGGAYNEWS FROM POLAND:

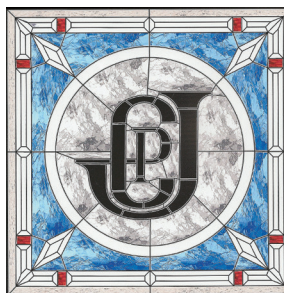
Poland's Only Gay Parliamentarian Attacked After Pride

The *Advocate* reports that Poland's first openly gay member of Parliament was assaulted outside a café in Warsaw after he attended the city's annual Pride parade Saturday, reports PinkNews. Robert Biedron, a member of Parliament since his election in 2011, alleges that he and a group of friends were approached by a hostile man who began making homophobic remarks to them as they made their way to a café after the parade. Biedron said that the man spat in his face and kicked him in the stomach upon recognizing who he was, and while the suspect fled the scene, he was arrested shortly thereafter by police.

BIGGAYNEWS FROM RUSSIA:

Russian Lawmakers Pass Ban On Adoption Tied To Gay Foreign Couples

The *Los Angeles Times* reports that the lower house of Russia's parliament gave initial approval Tuesday to ban the adoption of Russian orphans by foreign same-sex married couples or by single persons from countries where same-sex marriages are allowed. This measure is considered by many to be in response to France's legalizing of same-sex marriage last month. Sergei Zheleznyak, a deputy speaker of the State Duma, stated: "If a child ends up brought up by a gay couple, the child of course is seriously traumatized and develops a distorted notion of the surrounding reality." □



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Man Up

My girlfriend's kid turned 13 last week. According to Jewish tradition, that makes him a man.

"Now that you're a man, I expect you to start mixing my cocktails," I informed him, handing him a recipe for mojitos.

"But you're not even Jewish," he said.

"I follow whatever religion benefits me most at any given moment. And the Jews say that now that you're a man you have to stop leaving your clothes on the floor and put them in the hamper."

He looked at me in confusion, and then said, "Remind me again, what's a hamper?"

"It's that basket in the laundry room that your mom slams really hard each time she scoops our clothes off the floor and shoves them into it."

This kid is surrounded by mothers and step-mothers (six at last count—if you're a lesbian with a romantic history I won't have to explain the math; if you're a gay man, just shake your head in disgust), but I don't really qualify as one of them.

The rest of his gaggle of maternal creatures hover above him like loving drones, swooping in to obliterate any small threat to his emotional health. His every whim is satisfied immediately. Every self doubt is fretted over. And there have been countless hours of disturbing speculation about what he does behind his closed bedroom door at night.

"He's 13," I said to the coven of hand-wringers. "What the hell do you think he's doing in the privacy of his bedroom? And if you want to see for yourself, just keep barging in without knocking on his door first."

I've known the kid since he was 8, and I made it clear from day one that I was not another mother hen. Rather, I'm like the more experienced kid from a troubled home that your mom doesn't want you to

play with. The first time we were alone together, I introduced him to "The Sopranos," a TV show not known for its kid-friendly content. He loved it. And I was promptly scolded for my poor judgment by the other moms.

But thwarting authority is what I'm all about, and over the years he's edged closer to my sloppy influence while keeping a careful eye on his altogether more skilled, nurturing, wise, and wonderful moms.

Although I'm not Jewish, he is. And so, for the past year, he's been preparing for his bar mitzvah. Much of the preparation involved interviewing the women and men in his life about what it means to be an adult. I waited with great anticipation for my interview! I had a lot to say on the subject. Most of it had to do with how awesome it is to be able to eat and drink whatever you want, and to have the freedom to tell people to go to hell whenever you want. And to continue to wear footie pajamas well into middle age and not give a damn what anyone thinks about it.

But by the morning of the Bar Mitzvah, it became clear that he had no intention of including me in his interviews.

"Because you're not an adult," he said, when I asked him why I was the only mom not interviewed.

"I am, too!" I cried, stomping my foot and contemplating whether to throw a tantrum to pull the spotlight away from the bar mitzvah boy and onto me.

But, then he gave me that sly crooked smile that he tries to suppress each time he greets me after a long absence. It's the smile that let's me know how delighted he is to see me, and not just because I let him use all his curse words when we're driving alone in the car. "You're not an adult," he confirmed. "You're a friend." □

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Dear Ms. Behavior:

I met these two guys last year and we hit it off. We had a lot of fun as a group, going to parties and out to the bars. I guess you can say I was their “boy.” Sexually, I liked one dad better than the other and it showed.

Things started to get bad for my two dads and they are no longer together. The one I liked more wants me to be with him. I’m all for it; I love him and he is a great guy.

Here’s the bad part: When they started to have problems I met this other guy online. I knew my two dads were breaking up and I would be out in the cold, so I thought what I was doing was okay. The guy from online lives way out of state. I’m thinking about moving to be with him.

I really like both guys a lot. The only thing that’s not the same is the sex. Sex with one is really hot and the other is good. What should I do? I have fallen in love with both and don’t want to hurt any one.

—LOST BOY

Dear Lost Boy:

Your problem isn’t which “dad” to pick, but rather that you’re lost. Quickly snagging a new boyfriend online so that you wouldn’t be “out in the cold,” suggests that you feel anxious about being on your own. Maybe you’re afraid you can’t sustain yourself financially or emotionally. But if you’re living in a panicked state where survival feels dependent on someone taking care of you, it’s hard to decide which man to use as your anchor/boyfriend.

It’s time to identify and deal with your fears (perhaps through therapy), so that you don’t find yourself moving cross-country ev-

ery time a relationship ends. That will soon grow tedious, not to mention expensive. Ultimately, you’ll be happier choosing men based on mutual interest and attraction rather than your fear of being alone.

Sex isn’t always the best predictor of a successful relationship. A good relationship requires chemistry, but that doesn’t seem to be your problem. Hot sex seems better than good sex, but it depends on why the hot sex is hot. If it’s because you rarely see each other or because your hook-ups are surrounded by secrets or drama, the temperature may quickly drop if you live together or aren’t titillated by the prospect of another party finding out.

Ultimately, you should figure out what you can give yourself that isn’t dependent on someone else taking care of you. So, go to your room, young man, and take some time to sort it out. Pretend Daddy sent you, if that helps.

Dear Ms. Behavior:

My partner Jodi and I have been together for 3 1/2 years. Recently, Jodi got down on bended knee and proposed. It was so romantic, I couldn’t refuse. We’re planning to wed in Provincetown in June.

Here’s the problem: while it’s great that we can finally marry and perhaps get some of the legal protections that straight people take for granted, I think marriage is an outdated, sexist construct designed to preserve men’s property rights and subrogate women. Wouldn’t it be more meaningful for us to define our commitment to each other on our own terms rather than buying into some heterosexual ideal?

But what do I tell Jodi? She’s excited

about planning a big, traditional, hetero-style wedding with matching dresses and a five-tier wedding cake. Do I burst her bubble and tell her that I don’t want any part of this sugar-coated charade or do I just smile and register our china pattern?

—NOT THE MARRYING KIND

Dear Not the Marrying Kind:

While many queer couples are doing somersaults of joy to celebrate their marriages, others are secretly pulling each other’s hair out over where to marry, who to invite, and what it all means. Formerly the exclusive domain of heteros, the drama that surrounds marriage is a normal part of negotiating any huge emotional commitment. And as trying as it may be, such negotiations can actually make your relationship stronger.

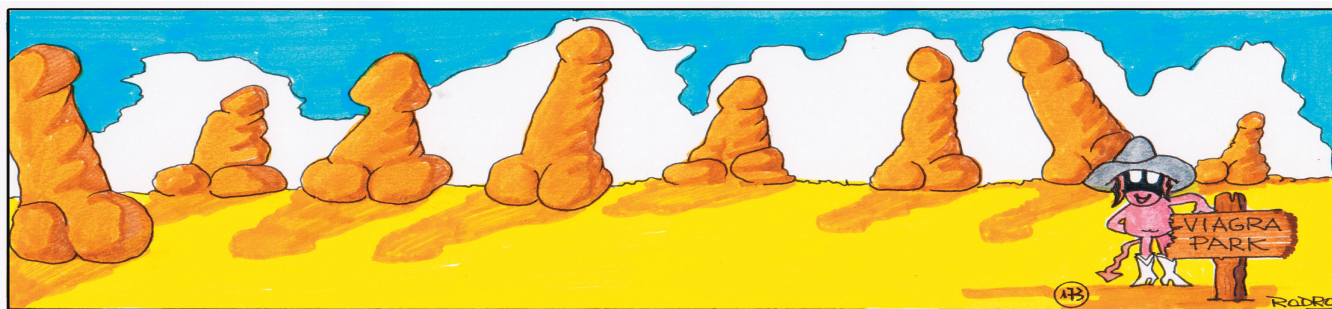
You and Jodi need to discuss your fantasies about marriage, itemizing the details that matter most, and those that you might be willing to compromise. Maybe you can figure out which traditional parts you can stomach (perhaps the majestic wedding cake?) and which ones offend you. Jodi can decide which traditional aspects she can do without, and which ones seem particularly meaningful to her. Ultimately, you should be able to work out a happy compromise.

Frankly, the only part of Jodi’s plan Ms. Behavior finds distressing is the matching dresses. Please try to come up with a sensible alternative. □

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Pictures at the Zoo – Through the Eyes of Jaclyn G.

I'm driving home from work, but the road and traffic have fallen away. My ears are ringing. I'm confused and have around me a sense of unreality. Moments ago I broke his heart, the man I was going to marry.

He told me he'd get his life together—go to school, find a job—and yet here he is: “hanging out” with his parents, throwing away what could've been the rest of our lives.

“I love you, but,” I say and feel his heart brace for impact, “But I can't do this anymore.”

Before me flash five years at his side, and in them, my happiest moments. I see us at the zoo, where we'd make up things animals would say about people if they could talk, about how they'd laugh at how silly we are for watching them shit. I see us at outdoor concerts with wayfarers on and beers in our hands. And I see him doing some annoyingly cute, computer-nerdy thing.

Now I'm in my car, hot all over, adrenaline-drunk and unsure. And I'm scared. I'm really fucking scared. Now I have no one. I have no friends in Minneapolis. I'm going to be alone forever.

Six Months Pass.

Six months after our breakup and I'm sitting in a hundred-degree bus in the middle of August after a day at the zoo, air musk-soaked with the sweat of a dozen coworkers. I'm sitting beside my manager.

Six months after our breakup and I

have friends. I'm able to sleep alone. I'm not depressed. I'm on my own, and I'm well. I didn't need him then, and I sure as hell don't need him now.

But his shadow remains, poking my mind every time I get him off of it, filling me whenever I smell his cologne, hear our music, talk to our friends. And my manager, the ever insightful, sees my suffering.

My manager knows. In her I confide maybe too much, but she's non-judgmental, or good at hiding it if she is. She'll share advice when I need it, and I need some today.

“Look, Jaclyn,” she says, “You have to ask yourself something: Do you want a man who will support you financially, or one who will support you emotionally?”

I look past her, through a dirty bus window and at the zoo. *What?* A man who will... *What?*

My vision blurs. There's ringing in my ears. Oh my God. *What am I doing?*

So plainly hidden that it went unnoticed, her question is salvation from denial. Here I've sat in judgment of the love of my life, throwing around heart-crushing tantrums when things weren't going my way. I've been harsh, stubborn, inflexible. And *he's* the child?

Our breakup was partially the result of my imposing upon him “adulthood” as I knew it, of my ultimatum-laced Better-for-

Us expectations. The future I wanted for us, no doubt well-intentioned, was MY future. Not ours.

What kind of man do I want, she asks? I want a man who will... I want *the* man who will make me happy.

I want him. My him. Not the him who belongs to my fantasies. Not the him who sits around with a broken heart. I want *him*, the man I love—and no more than who he is.

He is, after all, my kind of silly; my Sunday-morning-hangover partner-in-crime; my blanket-hogging, movie-watching, concert-going, love-making kind of guy.

As for adulthood? Fuck it. We define our own. I love him, and after a summer in doubt, I know this is, and will remain, true, suit-and-tie or not.

So it is on this bus I realize that we'll be together again, and it is here at the zoo, as our bus pulls away, that I imagine inside live animals talking shit about silly people doing silly things. ■

Jaclyn lives in Minneapolis with her boyfriend, Brian. They haven't been back to the zoo... yet.

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